



# NEWS

For Immediate Release  
December 8, 2004

Bryan Wilkes  
(202) 586-7371

## **NNSA Names Chief of Defense Nuclear Safety**

WASHINGTON, DC -- National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Administrator Linton Brooks today announced that James McConnell, a former Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) official, has been named NNSA's chief of defense nuclear safety.

In this newly established position, McConnell will be responsible for the development and implementation of NNSA-wide safety programs. His role is to increase corporate focus on nuclear safety and to coordinate safety issues at the NNSA site offices and headquarters. He reports directly to the NNSA administrator and advises NNSA on its interactions with the DOE, DNFSB, and other federal, state, and local agencies on matters relating to nuclear safety.

"Safety oversight of our nuclear weapons facilities is a major responsibility for NNSA, and it has become clear to me that NNSA needs a senior-level position focused solely on safety," said Brooks. "Jim's expertise and experience with safety issues in the weapons complex make him well-qualified for the job."

McConnell, a former naval officer, has a career of oversight in nuclear safety. Spending 12 years at the DNFSB, he most recently was deputy technical director. In that position, he directed the board's technical staff and provided overall strategic planning to achieve the board's technical safety oversight mission. During his tenure at DNFSB, he also served as a group leader of the Nuclear Weapons Program, a site representative at the Pantex Plant, program manager for the Y-12 National Security Complex at Oak Ridge and a technical specialist. A former U.S. Navy officer, he served as a division officer on the USS Houston stationed in San Diego, CA.

He holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the U.S. Naval Academy and masters' degrees from the Catholic University of America and George Washington University.

Established by Congress in 2000, NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear energy. NNSA maintains and enhances the safety, security, reliability and performance of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile without nuclear testing; works to reduce global danger from weapons of mass destruction; provides the U.S. Navy with safe and effective nuclear propulsion; and responds to nuclear and radiological emergencies in the U.S. and abroad.

###

NA-04-31